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PRESS RELEASE

The New Brunswick Arts Board Launches New Regional Funding Program in Edmundston

Edmundston, September 20, 2007 – In collaboration with partners, the New Brunswick Arts Board (NBAB) is launching the New Brunswick Regional Arts Funding Program in Edmundston on September 20th. This pilot project is intended to increase the sources of revenue available to professional artists and artists' collectives in the Edmundston region and to encourage creative projects that will reinforce partnerships and cooperative action in the community, by enabling professional artists at all levels of their career to make a recognized contribution, increase their visibility and develop their particular talents.

The funding agreement will see the New Brunswick Arts Board, the Department of Wellness, Culture and Sport, Enterprise Madawaska and the City of Edmundston contribute a total of $75,000 in 2007-2008 for the Regional Arts Funding Program. The New Brunswick Regional Arts Funding agreement is part of the NBAB's orientation towards a greater democratization of culture, and a confirmation of the New Brunswick Arts Board's commitment to recognize regional differences.

"The Arts Board has a mandate to promote the arts at a professional level and to facilitate distribution of the arts in as many milieus as possible," said Benoît Duguay, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Arts Board. "I can assure you of my colleagues' commitment to the spirit of this mandate. Nothing could further this agenda better than the partnership being launched with Edmundston today."

"The Government of New Brunswick believes that the arts and culture play an important role in our self-sufficiency agenda," said Premier Shawn Graham, Minister of Wellness, Culture and Sport. "Supporting grassroots initiatives like this one will not only make it easier for artists to earn a living creating their art, but will also allow local residents to develop a greater appreciation for the unique talents of those artists living in their midst."

The pilot agreement will be revised after one year of operation. The project's objectives are to support creative initiatives and artistic projects that value the work of the professional artist within his or her community; to support creative artistic projects that involve initiatives that value artist-creation-community partnerships in Edmundston; and to foster the participation of greater numbers of Edmundston's citizens in the arts by making it more accessible within their own community.

To be eligible for the Funding Program, applicants must be a professional artist or writer, or an artists' or writers' collective working in media arts, visual arts, multidisciplinary arts, dance, the literary arts, fine crafts, music or theatre. Eligible projects for the Regional Arts Funding Program must be initiated by professional artists who will contribute 25% of the total budget. Artists of all levels may apply. Artists may receive a grant of $5,000, $10,000 or $15,000 per fiscal year. Applications for funding will be assessed by a jury of arts resource people working in the region. All applications will be assessed on the basis of merit, the objectives and the assessment criteria specific to the New Brunswick Arts Funding Program.

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